

# THE STORY OF HANNAH WRAY.

By EDWIN W. PUGH.

Author of "A Street in Suburbia."

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## SYNOPSIS.

The story has been told to the author by Jacob Bern, or Barn, who worked as a servant man for Hannah Wray, in her youth. Hannah comes to the little town of Market Warden, in western England, from London, and establishes herself at a house on the outskirts of the place. She does not associate with the residents, and little is known of her, although it is taken for granted that she had been married. She excites curiosity by her daily riding on horseback, but this wears away. It is observed that she usually rides in the vicinity of the jail, where convicts are at work in the fields. One day a dense fog settles on the country. Hannah Wray hears the sound of a gun in the direction of the jail. She sees lighted candles in her window. She is shortly afterwards visited by a sergeant and guards, who inquire whether she has seen an escaped convict. They leave, and she hears a tip at the window. She sees the face of a man who calls her by name. She opens the door.

## PART II.

"Is it John?" she faltered. He said: "Yes," and she drew him into the room and closed the door.

"Don't let it," he said. She struggled with the heavy fastenings, and he went to her aid. Their hands touched. He looked at her.

"Hannah, poor girl!" he whispered. "Don't think of me," she gasped.

"Let's see your face, Hannah. Here, hold up your chin. I'm hungry for a good long sight of you."

He turned her face to the fire. Very beautiful she looked in that soft light. He gazed at her mournfully.

"My Hannah!" He kissed her on the lips. She suffered the caress. Her proud face quivered; her eyes burned.

"So could," he cried, snatching at her hand. "Why is this?"

Then, her womanhood melting, she held out her arms in invitation to him, and murmured his name tenderly. He gathered her to his breast.

"Ah, no," she murmured, in a little while. "We must not do this, John. You must take horse and away."

"Not yet," he said. "There is no danger yet. Let me stay here an hour at least, that I may make sure of just

she crouched beside him while he rasped at his bonds.

"I used to see you on the hill when you rode out," he said. "That was a sign."

"A sign," she answered. "I understood, and knew that you were near me."

"My guiltless one!" "Ah, God, yes! My Hannah! It helped me to endure. It kept me from madness. I could hope and pray with you near me."

"My poor love!" "We will be happy yet, my Hannah!" She smiled and nodded. "I have made such cunning schemes," she breathed, "in all my life. If today had happened a year ago or ten years hence it would be the same. The opportunity always comes at last."

"Now, listen and admire. Mark waits for you at Saint Rose to take you over to the new world!"

Her gaze had fallen suddenly upon his heavy iron; a racking sob burst from her. The life and sparkle died out of her face. She went aloud.

"Oh, the cruel chains!" she cried. "No, no," he murmured, soothing her distress. "You must not cry so. You have been so brave!"

"I am a woman," she answered. "The woman!" he exclaimed. "See how straight I came to you. There, there, my love, let me kiss away your tears!"

The file lay idle on the floor whilst he held her in his arms.

A pedlar happened to pass along the road that night, on his road to Market Warden. He saw the lights burning in Hannah Wray's window and entered her garden, intending to knock at the door and offer his wares to the good wife of the house. Hearing voices, however, and seeing that no blind or curtain obscured the window, he was moved by idle curiosity to play the spy. Then he went scudding up the high road at a great pace.

There was a knot of soldiers outside "The Home Tap," in a circle of yokes. The pedlar burst upon them with his news.

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needed a kindly word. In a mile the fugitive had doubled his lead and was beyond their ken. The sergeant swore justly, and, putting on pace, drove ahead of his fellows. He was the best horse. But at a crossroad he was forced to await his lagging men and call a halt.

"Track me if I know which way the rascal's gone!" he growled. "Keep your horses still a moment, Hark!"

He lowered his head and listened. At once the night seemed thick with noises. An old cornacre in some fir at hand uttered a rasping croak and twenty smaller birds in the trees and hedges twittered in low, sleepy protest. The horses rattled their bits. An owl hooted mournfully. In the ditches the rushing water purled and bubbled merrily.

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commendable weariness. "Pon my honor, but I'm sorry to have caught you!"

His quarry laughed—softly, sweetly, maliciously. The sergeant strode forward with a startled face, gasping: "What is this?"

Hannah Wray doffed her hat to him.

So, this true story ends. And I would that all true stories ended as happily.

The outwitted sergeant rode back to Tigbury, leaving Hannah Wray to go free. "I honor you, ma'am, too much to lay my dirty hands upon you," he said, gallantly, at parting. His honest admiration of her exploit, and his fear of the ridicule that must cover him if

he were to lay his hands upon her, were the only reasons for his conduct.

The people are enthralled, steeped in poverty and misery, ignorance follows as a result, they bear the impress of oppression, and despair permeates the humbler life. The people live in deadly fear of a conflict. The resources that should go to the aid of the down-trodden and mitigate their sufferings go to the support of the military. The brilliant sound of war fills the atmosphere, the blessed air of peace and freedom are an enigma to the people of Europe, they live in fear of their neighbor. In view of such unhappy environments does it not behoove the favored of the earth to support all methods looking to the betterment of humanity.

Arbitration must come, and a victory is assured by the two foremost nations of the earth, it is in touch and sympathy with Christian teachings and desires. This nation is a land of advanced ideas, and to her the world looks for suggestions favoring humanity, circumstances tend to that ennobling and harmonious end. The ratification of the treaty is called for from philanthropists of both countries and intelligence speaks imperatively for it.

It is unquestionably a powerful doctrine, favorable to the unity of the two peoples upon international matters. The thought is commensurate with this day and age, and must prevail to the welfare of the world at large. Revolt to Europe today and we have a forcible lesson in support of arbitration. War is a travesty on intelligence. The high grade of intelligence possessing the two nations demand its ratification. The thought of war is retrograde and demoralizing, and the initiative must be embraced by those in the van of civilization, and their influence should be made subservient to that end. The world looks to the United States and Great Britain for example. Should the treaty be confirmed the countries interested can sing with inspiration a joyful psalm in its honor. The enormous cost of Europe's armies today is fabulous and suggests the lines of London.

Were half the power that fills the world with terror.

Were half the wealth bestowed on causes and courts.

Given to redeem the human mind from error.

There were no need of arsenals and forts.

Fred. Hartnoll.

Dunmore, Feb. 25, 1897.

**London's Water Supply.**

The average daily supply of water to London delivered from the Thames during the month of September was 111,283,381 gallons; from the Great Ouse, 48,834,535 gallons; from springs and wells, 33,882,174 gallons; from ponds at Hampstead and Highgate, 12,674 gallons. The daily total was, therefore, 196,660,177 gallons for a population estimated at 5,634,499, representing a daily consumption per head of 34.72 gallons for all purposes.

**The Value of Work.**

Work drives away depression, whets the appetite for food, invigorates the pro-mote digestion, strengthens the muscles and sinews, gives free circulation of the blood, stimulates the intellectual faculties, provides the comforts of life, de-

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